



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
MATERIALS TRANSPORTATION BUREAU
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

45696

[49 CFR Part 178]

[Docket No. HM-155]

CONSOLIDATION OF DRUM
SPECIFICATIONS

Advance Notice of Proposed Rule Making

AGENCY: Materials Transportation Bureau, DOT.

ACTION: Advance notice of proposed rule making.

SUMMARY: This advance notice provides information and an opportunity for comment on the proposed consolidation of specifications for drums to be used for the transportation of hazardous materials.

DATE: Comments must be received on or before November 17, 1977.

ADDRESS: Comments should be addressed to the Section of Dockets, Office of Hazardous Materials Operations, Department of Transportation, Washington, D.C. 20590. Five copies should be submitted.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Mr. Alan I. Roberts, Director, Office of Hazardous Materials Operations, Department of Transportation, 2100 Second Street SW., Washington, D.C. 20590 (202-426-0656).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: In recent years there have been a number of attempts made to consolidate the specifications for drums as provided for in Part 178 of the Hazardous Materials Regulations. For instance, the staff of this Office discussed with the Steel Shipping Container Institute (SSCI) and the Chemical Packaging Committee of the Manufacturing Chemists Association (MCA), several alternatives for consolidating some, but not all, of the specifications for drums in Part 178 of Title 49 CFR. As a result of this cooperative work, a petition for rule making was received which sought an amendment of Part 178 of the Department of Transportation's Hazardous Materials Regulations to consolidate the specifications for steel drums in the 17 and 37 (single-trip) series. Another petition to consolidate the specifications for aluminum drums in the 42 series was received at a later date. Primary drafters of this document are Mario E. Gigliotti and Douglas A. Crockett.

Extensive background information on this subject indicates that many benefits will accrue as a result of consolidating the drum specifications. Among these are: The number of drum specifications in the Regulations can be reduced; the Regulations can be made more concise and uniform, and thus easier to use; the drum specifications can be made simpler and less redundant, as well as more readily adapted to the incorporation of performance-oriented test procedures and requirements. Moreover, the background information also implies that the drum consolidation may favorably affect packagers and shippers of hazardous materials, carriers and drum manufacturers and, therefore, could enhance the safe transportation of hazardous materials.

To develop a Notice of Proposed Rule Making certain information is required and, therefore, the Bureau is providing this opportunity for comment on the consolidation of specifications for drums for hazardous materials. Comments should be addressed to the following questions:

1. Is there a need to consolidate the specifications for drums?

2. Should the consolidation, if made, embrace all drum specifications? That is, Metal (series 5) Specifications 5, 5A, 5B, 5C, 5D, 5F, 5H, 5K, 5L, 5M, 5X, and 5P; (series 6) Specifications 6A, 6B, 6C, 6J, 6K, and 6D; (series 42) Specifications 42B, 42C, 42D, 42F, 42G, 42H, and 42E; (series 17) Specifications 17C, 17E, 17F, 17H, and 17X; (series 37) Specifications 37K, 37A, 37B, 37P, 37M, 37C, and 37D; Specification 13A; Fiber, Specifications 21C and 21P; Wooden, plywood, Specifications 22A, 22B, and 22C; Polyethylene, Specification 34; Rubber, Specification 43A.

3. Should the consolidation be limited to specifications for metal drums, i.e., series 5, series 6, series 42, series 17, series 37, plus specification 13A? Or should each of the series of metal drum specifications be separately consolidated? That is, consolidate the 5's, the 6's, the 42's, the 17's, the 37's?

4. Should the consolidation be narrowed to include only the drums in series 17 and series 37 as proposed by the SSCI and MCA?

5. Should the consolidation(s) break down the specifications into "families" of drums? For instance—

(a) Single-trip containers (STC); nonreusable containers (NRC); and reusable containers.

(b) Removable head drums; and nonremovable head drums.

(c) Steel drums, e.g., series 5, 6, 17, and 37, plus specification 13A.

(d) Aluminum drums, e.g., series 42.

(e) Fiber drums, e.g., Specifications 21C and 21P.

(f) Wooden (plywood) drums, e.g., Specifications 22A, 22B, and 22C.

(g) Polyethylene drum, e.g., Specification 34.

(h) Rubber drum, e.g., Specification 43A.

6. Based on negligible use for hazardous materials or lack of production, are certain specification drums obsolete and thus appropriate for cancellation?

7. Should the consolidation(s) of drum specifications be substantive in nature (i.e., include technical changes) or solely editorial?

Comments addressing potential editorial or substantive amendment of the DOT drum specifications should identify and substantiate any reasonably foreseen costs or benefits to industry, the public, or to Federal or State Governments. This information is necessary for an adequate evaluation of the comments and for examination of possible economic impacts prior to publication of any subsequent notice of proposed rule making.

(49 U.S.C. 1803, 1804, 1808; 49 CFR 1.53(e) and paragraph (a) (4) of Appendix A to Part 102.)

Issued in Washington, D.C., on September 6, 1977.

ALAN I. ROBERTS,
Director, Office of
Hazardous Materials Operations.
[FR Doc 77 26371 Filed 9-9-77; 8:45 am]